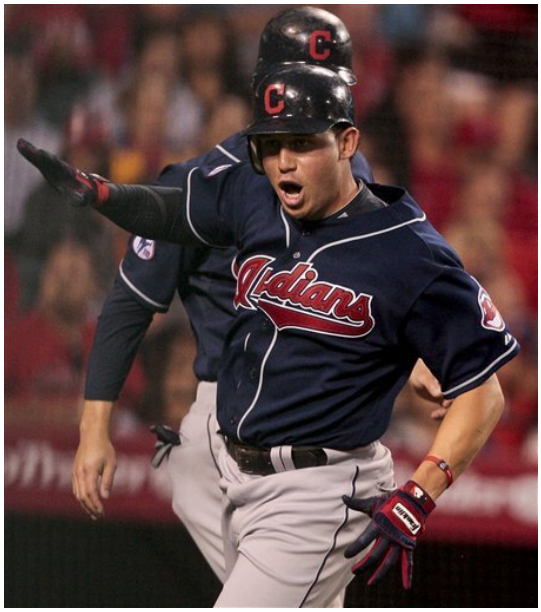


Forgive me if I'm still struggling to believe that the team playing the smart baseball, moving runners, taking away outs instead of giving extra ones and doing all the little things right is the team with the block 'C' on their caps. And forgive me for struggling to believe that the pitching staff throwing up zeroes and minimizing damage instead of imploding is the team from Cleveland.

I'll get used to it.

What I may never get used to is actually watching an NBA basketball game and rooting hard for the team with Paul Pierce and Kevin Garnett. LeBron James makes me just that sick. And so do the experts who see it as a sign of maturation and leadership that LeBron is 'letting' Dwyane Wade take control of the Miami Heat. It's not leadership or maturation. I'll tell you exactly what it is below.

But first, a little bit on the best team in the American League…..

Takin' Care of Business

If you can go out to the west coast and play .500 baseball you're doing work.

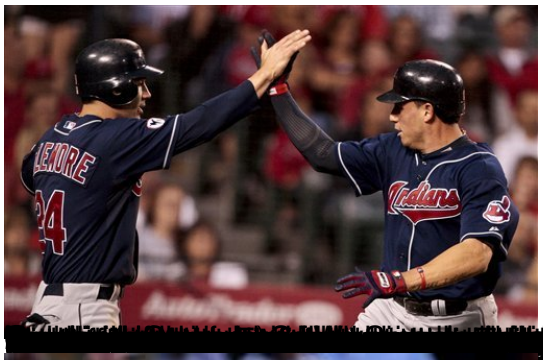
If you can go out to the west coast and play .500 baseball against four of the best pitchers in the American League then you're doing real good work.

That's what the Indians did on their recent jaunt to Oakland and Anaheim this past week and, despite losing a couple of close ball games, they took care of their business. You always want more from life whether it's time on earth, money, sex or wins from your hometown team, but sometimes you just have to tip your cap to the other guy and take what you get.

What this recent trip did for the Tribe may not be measurable until later this summer or maybe into the fall. But if you see a team down the road that recognizes a close ball game early in the match up and hones in on taking care of the finer things like fundamentals defense and moving runners then you might want to look back on this recent trip as the inspiration for that attention to detail.

People mimimize or belittle the contributions of veterans who have experienced some form of success at the major league level but veterans like Orlando Cabrera mean a great deal to this Indians club. The leadership that Cabrera provides not only to his infield mates but to the entire roster is impoortant. It's Cabrera taking charge of the meetings on the mound which may not sound like a big deal until you look at the experience level of most of the Indians pitching staff.

It's also Cabrera that's shown himself to me than a symboic old tribal chief with a number of big hits or run producing at bats and that's critical for credibility purposes. Shaving cream pies go only so far and it's always nice to see your leaders lead by example, especially on such a young club.



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